

29 May 1981

CIA Support of the USGS World Energy Program

-A Point Paper-

- The Central Intelligence Agency has recently learned that the World Energy Program of the US Geological Survey may be unfunded for FY 1982 and 1983.
  - Two Offices within CIA's National Foreign Assessment Center—the Office of Geographic and Societal Research and the Office of Economic Research—rely on the World Energy Program for basic geologic information used in making NFAC's annual estimates of Soviet and Chinese oil prospects and of Soviet uranium supplies.
  - Termination of the USGS program will impair these research efforts.
  - CIA/NFAC supports the continuation of USGS analysis of foreign energy sources, specifically petroleum and uranium in the Soviet Union and China.
- Since 1977, the USGS World Energy Program has been a steady contributor of basic geologic data and analysis for CIA's estimates for Soviet oil prospects, providing valuable studies of:
  - The West Siberian Basin, the USSR's richest oil producing region, and Samotlor, Federovo, and Salym Oilfields.
  - The Caspian Sea Basin and Uzen Oilfield.
  - The Volga-Urals oil producing region and Romashkino and Arlan Oilfield.
- USGS is currently performing other research of direct value to CIA's energy analysis, including studies of:
  - Other key sedimentary basins and oilfields in the Soviet Union.
  - Chinese petroleum resources.
  - Soviet uranium deposits.
- The value to CIA of the research performed by the World Energy Program is increasing.
  - The Soviet Union—as well as a growing number of other countries—are reluctant to release hard information on their supplies of petroleum and other critical fuel minerals.

—To make energy estimates for these "denied" areas, CIA relies on a technical approach that makes use of geologic and engineering data.

—The USGS has been—and continues to be—an important contributor to making CIA's methodological approach viable.

- The research contributions of the World Energy Program, and particularly its work on Soviet and Chinese petroleum and uranium resources, would be hard for CIA to replace.

—No other governmental [or non-profit private] agency is performing basic research on foreign fuel geology.

—CIA is neither chartered nor staffed nor funded to perform such research itself.

—By virtue of its high standing in professional circles, USGS can tap foreign and domestic experts who simply would not be available to CIA at any price.

—The USGS research products carry a professional validity that is hard to match and that lends credibility to CIA's petroleum intelligence estimates.